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ABSTRACT

The Mapuches, a tribe now numbering about 500,000 people in south central Chile are the descendants of the Araucanians of Spanish legend. Many still speak only their own idiom, which now shows much lexical influence of the surrounding Spanish. This paper is an exposition of Maria Catrileo Chiguailaf de Godo's research in her native language. It concentrates mainly on phonology and morpho-syntax, with heavy emphasis on verb forms. (DD)

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MARÍA CATRILEO'S WORK IN THE TAGMEMICS OF MAPUCHE

Some of the esoteric languages of South American Indian groups are now becoming more accessible to linguists for study because of the specialized training being achieved by a few of their native speakers. An informant who is also a skilled linguist contributes immeasurably to the comprehension of his own speech patterns and idiosyncrasies. Among such idioms is Mapuche, spoken in the villages of southern Chile.

When I was teaching an intensive short course at the University of Chile in Temuco in 1970, I met a young woman of whom I had heard through several linguists in Santiago. María Catrileo Chiguailaf de Godo, a professor of English and linguistics in that far southern province of the country, may well be the only living Mapuche Indian who is master of Spanish and English as well as of her own ideolect. Certainly she is unique as a professional linguist among those of her background. I found her accomplishments astonishing and humbling, particularly after I had seen something of the remote and primitive farming region where her family lives. Their cold, forbidding, rain-battered shelters made even our bleak Navajo hogans look comfortable with their butane stoves and pick-up trucks parked alongside.

The Fulbright Commission helped me to arrange for María Catrileo's sojourn a few months later at the University of Texas at El Paso. There she joined the teaching staff and spent two years working on the grammatical analysis of her native language with Drs. Ray Past, Edward L. Blansitt Jr., and Charles Elerick, specialists on the faculty of the Department of Linguistics, before returning to Temuco. I offer here a brief introduction, limited and eclectic, to the research in tagmemics that she has pursued with them.

The Mapuches, a tribe now numbering about 500,000 people in south central Chile, are the famous invincible Araucanians of Spanish legend in the Old and New Worlds. Of these, some 300,000 of

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the independent agricultural folk and fishermen still speak only their own idiom, which now shows much influence of the surrounding Spanish on the lexicon, although the structure remains essentially unaltered.

Phonologically, the sounds of the language can be classified as six vowels, eleven dipthongs, eighteen consonants, and three semi-consonants. There is no contrast between alveolar and dental nasals with lateral sounds in any utterance; there does not appear to be any phonological conditioning factor that would permit the prediction of alveolar or dental position. Mapuche speakers do clearly distinguish in alveolar-dental contrast, but the substitution of one for another does not affect the meaning of the phoneme. In the orthography of her studies, Catrileo makes no attempt to separate the alveolar and dental formations. There is at present no official set of written symbols for Mapuche, so that investigators in the past have adapted various systems from other languages.

At the outset of morphological analysis, the linguist observes that the verb root can take numerous markers to convey meanings for which other languages use longer contexts. These addenda include tense, benefactive and non-benefactive, passive, cessation, directional, negative, and subject-relator markers. Any or all of these indicators may be combined into the same structure. For example:

ngilha = to buy	ngilhan	= I bought
	n	= subject-relator marker
	ngilhaan	= I will buy
	a	= future tense marker
	ngilhakantuan	= I will pretend to buy
	kantu	= pretence marker
	ngilhangey	= it was brought
	nge	= passive marker

	y	= subject-relator marker (third person singular)
ngilawelan		= I have stopped buying
	wela	= cessation marker
ngilhalngen		= I was bought, or someone bought something for me
	l	= benefactive marker
ngilhalelngerpan		= someone bought something for me on the way (from there to here)
	lel	= benefactive marker
	rpa	= directional marker
ngilhalelngerpalan		= he did not buy it for me on the way (from there to here)
	la	= negative marker
ngilhalkantulfaluwmeke-ngewēnmarparkelaymē ni nuke		= to my surprise, they have stopped coming and pretending to buy something for your mother on their way (from there to here)
	faluẅ	= pretence marker 2
	meke	= perform an action, do, make
	n̄ma	= non-benefactive marker
	rke	= surprise marker (to my surprise, they have...)

Each of these tagmemic markers has one, two, or more variant forms, with their use conditioned by phonological or morphosyntactic environments. Occasionally they occur in free variation. The negative marker, for example, has three main basic variants: la, kil, and nu. La appears after the verb root in the present, past, and future tenses. Kil follows the root to express the imperative, and nu is used for the conditional. Examples:

amu = to go	amulan	= I did not go
	amukilnge	= do not go

amunuli = if I do not go

In her work titled A Tagmemic Sketch of Mapuche Grammar, Professor Catrileo describes the inflections of the Mapuche verb for the imperative, desiderative, and conditional moods. Verbs can also be derived from adjectives, as in the following constructions.

lig = white — lig + subject-relator markers = verbs
lig + n ⟶ ligïn = to be white

kïme = good — kïme + n ⟶ kïmen = to be good

They can be derived from nouns as well. Three examples demonstrate such formations.

kïthaw = work (noun) — kïthawïn = to work

ilo = meat — ilon = to kill for meat

chalhwa = fish — chalhwan = to fish

In the consideration of phrase, clause, and sentence-level structures, Professor Catrileo has reported that almost all modifiers within noun phrases precede the noun head.

kom ti kïme fitake lifru = all the good big books

ke = plural marker added to adjective fita

The adjective phrase includes adjectives and intensifiers. She points out that intensifiers are rare in Mapuche. Only one is mentioned in the study.

rume = very

rume kïme lifru = very good book

In moving to the classification of clauses in the Indian idiom, eight categories are distinguished.

Meteorological phenomena:

Mawïni. = It rained.

Intransitive:

Fransiku ngimay. = Frank cried.

Unitransitive:

Inche ngilhan k'iñe lifru. = I bought a book.

Bitransitive:

Kuan elufi iyael ti pu wentru. =

John gave food to the men.

pu = plural marker added before the noun

Stative:

Kuan kasike ngeay. =

John the chief will be. (John will be the chief.)

Stative transitive:

Kuan narki pifi ñi lamngen. =

John cat called his sister. =

(John called his sister a cat.)

Motional:

Fransiku amuy waria mew. =

Frank went town to. = (Frank went to town.)

Motional transitive:

Kuan yey ñi lifru kolekio mew. =

John took his books school to. =

(John took his books to school.)

Incidentally, some cases of lexical borrowing from the Spanish, in addition to the subject names, are evident here:

lifru from libro

kasike from cacique (which in turn derives from another indigenous South American source)

kolekio from colegio (a new institution adopted from the European culture)

In syntax, Mapuche is mainly a structure of subject-verb-object organization, although there are a few exceptions of verbs that invariably follow the object. Sentences can be demonstrably classified as declarative, focal, non-focal, active, passive, or imperative in intentional expression. The peripheral tagmemes, those structures that can fill in temporal, locative, or manner slots in the cause-level structure, have also been exhaustively analyzed. Backsloping structures, which can fill in subject and object slots, have been comprehensively identified and classified as well.

In summary to this concise survey, the rich opportunity for linguistic and cultural exploration that is offered by the indigenous language of southern Chile is just beginning to come under formal study. There are now chairs of Mapuche in several state institutions of higher learning in the land and an increasing number of professors of the tongue of the proud Araucanians at national and foreign bi-cultural institutes. María Catrileo's work helps to make the idiom of the Mapuches, or People of the Land, of international interest.

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